

NVPAC
North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council

c/o School District # 44 North Vancouver
2121 Lonsdale Avenue, North Vancouver BC V7M 2K6
<http://www.northvanpac.org/>

3 March 2015

**Trustee Cyndi Gerlach, Chair,
Finance and Facilities Standing Committee
North Vancouver Board of Education**

Re: 2015-16 Budget Development Process

We appreciate this opportunity to contribute the perspectives of North Vancouver parents to the 2015-16 Budget Development Process.

As you are aware, NVPAC conducted a survey of parents last spring. From the comments submitted as part of the survey, the NVPAC Executive has identified the following areas as priorities for the coming year's budget:

- Libraries and Teacher Librarians
- Safe, clean and healthy classrooms and school facilities
- Better support for all students, including those identified as having special needs, gifted and talented students, and especially "grey area" students
- Additional resources such as assessment tools, so that students requiring extra support can be identified as soon as possible
- Training for all teachers to learn the new technology so they can communicate effectively with parents. This may be in ways such as classroom websites or blogs, or regular emails to parents.
- Equalize the advantage among schools
- Provide opportunities for "hands on" learning

Two PACs responded to our request for submissions for this meeting. Their submissions are attached to this letter. Norgate PAC requests funding for transportation to permit each of their eight divisions to go on five field trips per year. Carisbrooke PAC has identified Music and Art Programs, Libraries with Teacher Librarians and adequate Administration as their priorities.

Sincerely,

NORTH VANCOUVER PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Jane Lagden Holborne
Chair

Attachments: Norgate PAC (1 page)
Carisbrooke PAC (8 pages)

Cc: NVPAC Executive
Patty Bizzotto, Norgate PAC Chair
Victoria Grant-Smith, Carisbrooke PAC Chair

DPAC

For your consideration in support of the unique learning community at Norgate Community School.

Proposal:

To request financial aide to enable each of Norgate's divisions to engage in five field-based learning experiences annually using a contracted school bus for transportation.

Purpose:

Our intent would be that these experiences be directly connected to pedagogy and curricular concepts. That through these experiences students would learn how to interact with the world around them – all setting being learning opportunities, how learning in the real world is directly connected to their classroom and that their learning and competency is supported at both a basic and complex level by learning outside the walls of the classroom or school.

Rationale:

If we are going to establish in an interactive and direct linkage for our learners to the “big ideas” and core competencies of the new curriculum, we have to also find a way to provide them a consistent means to access the wider world and take advantage of the myriad of nature and place-based learning opportunities experiences that exist throughout the Lower Mainland. It could be argued anecdotally, as well as, supported by research that all students learning is enhanced by such opportunities. In our Community we have not found the ability of our students, the willingness of parents to engage, opportunities or access to those opportunities to be limited. What we lack is a consistent, reliably safe, way to get our students out - that is the biggest challenge. Where other communities might rely on parents to provide that way to get to experiences, it is not possible at Norgate.

Cost:

First Student Bus Line - transport

\$300 per round trip X 5 trips = \$1500 x 8 Divisions = \$12 000



Carisbrooke Elementary School

Parent Advisory Council

510 East Carisbrooke Road, North Vancouver, BC V7N 1N5

(604) 903-3380 Fax: (604) 903-3381

February 25, 2015

North Vancouver PAC

Attn. Jane Lagden Holborne, Chair

Re. Carisbrooke Elementary PAC

Comments on Budget Priorities for 2015/16 school year

Dear Jane,

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Budget Priorities for the school year 2015/2016.

At Carisbrooke Elementary we believe that successful individuals are the result of a well rounded education through K-12. Many students will continue developing into College and University, but the majority will count on the skills they learn through the vital K-12 education.

The above can only be achieved by having the appropriate staff and programs in place.

Music

A well funded music program is essential to child's development through K-12. It provides a means of expression and it expands a child's mind with access to the language of music. Funding in this area has been cut consistently year after year and we should not allow this to continue to happen.

Appendix 1

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/music-arts/the-benefits-of-music-education/>

Appendix 2

<http://www.childrensmusicworkshop.com/advocacy/toptenparents/>

Library

The exposure to a well funded school library and having access to a Teacher Librarian is critical for our children's education. Teacher librarians do much more than determine which amazing books the library should have. They not only promote reading, they are vital in providing literacy tools. A teacher-librarian also supports curriculum. They purchase books on specific topics at the appropriate reading level to support the B.C.

curriculum. In addition, they work collaboratively with classes, often teaching research skills, note taking, how to evaluate websites, where to search for information appropriate for elementary school students, etc. Finally, having a school library open with an available Teacher Librarian during school hours provides a place to learn and study. Again, Teacher Librarians' time is cut year after year and this should stop.

Appendix 3

<http://kenhaycock.com/school-libraries-and-student-achievement/>

Administration

Administrative staff is vital to the success of any school. Principals and Vice Principals, together with their support team, do much more than just "run the school". They provide many extracurricular activities such as sports and, with PAC resources, enable many programs that could not be available otherwise. Cutting resources in this area would damage schools as much as cutting teachers, books or supplies.

Carisbrooke PAC is proud of, and values, all our staff and does see priority funding to Arts and Culture as a must for any elementary school.

Priorities:

Music and Art programs

Libraries with Teacher Librarians

Adequate Administration Staff

Sincerely,

Victoria Grant-Smith
Chair, Carisbrooke PAC
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Lucy Cayuela
NVPAC Rep. for Carisbrooke PAC
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Appendix 1

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/music-arts/the-benefits-of-music-education/>

The Benefits of Music Education

By Laura Lewis Brown



Whether your child is the next Beyonce or more likely to sing her solos in the shower, she is bound to benefit from some form of music education. Research shows that learning the do-re-mis can help children excel in ways beyond the basic ABCs.

More Than Just Music

Research has found that learning music facilitates learning other subjects and enhances skills that children inevitably use in other areas. "A music-rich experience for children of singing, listening and moving is really bringing a very serious benefit to children as they progress into more formal learning," says Mary Luehrisen, executive director of the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation, a not-for-profit association that promotes the benefits of making music.

Making music involves more than the voice or fingers playing an instrument; a child learning about music has to tap into multiple skill sets, often simultaneously. For instance, people use their ears and eyes, as well as large and small muscles, says Kenneth Guilmartin, cofounder of Music Together, an early childhood music development program for infants through kindergarteners that involves parents or caregivers in the classes.

"Music learning supports all learning. Not that Mozart makes you smarter, but it's a very integrating, stimulating pastime or activity," Guilmartin says.

Language Development

"When you look at children ages two to nine, one of the breakthroughs in that area is music's benefit for language development, which is so important at that stage," says Luehrisen. While children come into the world ready to decode sounds and words, music education helps enhance those natural abilities. "Growing up in a musically rich environment is often advantageous for children's language development," she says. But Luehrisen adds that those inborn capacities need to be "reinforced, practiced, celebrated," which can be done at home or in a more formal music education setting.

According to the Children's Music Workshop, the effect of music education on language development can be seen in the brain. "Recent studies have clearly indicated that musical training physically develops the part of the left side of the brain known to be involved with processing language, and can actually wire the brain's circuits in specific ways. Linking familiar songs to new information can also help imprint information on young minds," the group claims.

This relationship between music and language development is also socially advantageous to young children. "The development of language over time tends to enhance parts of the brain that help process music," says Dr. Kyle Pruett, clinical professor of child psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine and a practicing musician. "Language competence is at the root of social competence. Musical experience strengthens the capacity to be verbally competent."

Increased IQ

A study by E. Glenn Schellenberg at the University of Toronto at Mississauga, as published in a 2004 issue of *Psychological Science*, found a small increase in the IQs of six-year-olds who were given weekly voice and piano lessons. Schellenberg provided nine months of piano and voice lessons to a dozen six-year-olds, drama lessons (to see if exposure to arts in general versus just music had an effect) to a second group of six-year-olds, and no lessons to a third group. The children's IQs were tested before entering the first grade, then again before entering the second grade.

Surprisingly, the children who were given music lessons over the school year tested on average three IQ points higher than the other groups. The drama group didn't have the same increase in IQ, but did experience increased social behavior benefits not seen in the music-only group.

The Brain Works Harder

Research indicates the brain of a musician, even a young one, works differently than that of a nonmusician. "There's some good neuroscience research that children involved in music have larger growth of neural activity than people not in music training. When you're a musician and you're playing an instrument, you have to be using more of your brain," says Dr. Eric Rasmussen, chair of the Early Childhood Music Department at the Peabody Preparatory of The Johns Hopkins University, where he teaches a specialized music curriculum for children aged two months to nine years.

In fact, a study led by Ellen Winner, professor of psychology at Boston College, and Gottfried Schlaug, professor of neurology at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Harvard Medical School, found changes in the brain images of children who underwent 15 months of weekly music instruction and practice. The students in the study who received music instruction had improved sound discrimination and fine motor tasks, and brain imaging showed changes to the networks in the brain associated with those abilities, according to the Dana Foundation, a private philanthropic organization that supports brain research.

Spatial-Temporal Skills

Research has also found a causal link between music and spatial intelligence, which means that understanding music can help children visualize various elements that should go together, like they would do when solving a math problem.

"We have some pretty good data that music instruction does reliably improve spatial-temporal skills in children over time," explains Pruett, who helped found the Performing Arts Medicine Association. These skills come into play in solving multistep problems one would encounter in architecture, engineering, math, art, gaming, and especially working with computers.

Improved Test Scores

A study published in 2007 by Christopher Johnson, professor of music education and music therapy at the University of Kansas, revealed that students in elementary schools with superior music education programs scored around 22 percent higher in English and 20 percent higher in math scores on standardized tests, compared to schools with low-quality music programs, regardless of socioeconomic disparities among the schools or school districts. Johnson compares the concentration that music training requires to the focus needed to perform well on a standardized test.

Aside from test score results, Johnson's study highlights the positive effects that a quality music education can have on a young child's success. Luehrisen explains this psychological phenomenon in two sentences: "Schools that have rigorous programs and high-quality music and arts teachers probably have high-quality teachers in other areas. If you have an environment where there are a lot of people doing creative, smart, great things, joyful things, even people who aren't doing that have a tendency to go up and do better."

And it doesn't end there: along with better performance results on concentration-based tasks, music training can help with basic memory recall. "Formal training in music is also associated with other cognitive strengths such as verbal recall proficiency," Pruett says. "People who have had formal musical training tend to be pretty good at remembering verbal information stored in memory."

Being Musical

Music can improve your child's abilities in learning and other nonmusic tasks, but it's important to understand that music does not make one smarter. As Pruett explains, the many intrinsic benefits to music education include being disciplined, learning a skill, being part of the music world, managing performance, being part of something you can be proud of, and even struggling with a less than perfect teacher.

"It's important not to oversell how smart music can make you," Pruett says. "Music makes your kid interesting and happy, and smart will come later. It enriches his or her appetite for things that bring you pleasure and for the friends you meet."

While parents may hope that enrolling their child in a music program will make her a better student, the primary reasons to provide your child with a musical education should be to help them become more musical, to appreciate all aspects of music, and to respect the process of learning an instrument or learning to sing, which is valuable on its own merit.

"There is a massive benefit from being musical that we don't understand, but it's individual. Music is for music's sake," Rasmussen says. "The benefit of music education for me is about being musical. It gives you have a better understanding of yourself. The horizons are higher when you are involved in music," he adds. "Your understanding of art and the world, and how you can think and express yourself, are enhanced."

Appendix 2

<http://www.childrensmusicworkshop.com/advocacy/toptenparents/>

Top Ten Advocacy Points for Parents

Music Education Advocacy Resources on amazon.com

1. In a 2000 survey, 73 percent of respondents agree that teens who play an instrument are less likely to have discipline problems.
- *Americans Love Making Music – And Value Music Education More Highly Than Ever*, American Music Conference, 2000.
2. Students who can perform complex rhythms can also make faster and more precise corrections in many academic and physical situations, according to the Center for Timing, Coordination, and Motor Skills
- *Rhythm seen as key to music's evolutionary role in human intellectual development*, Center for Timing, Coordination, and Motor Skills, 2000.
3. A ten-year study indicates that students who study music achieve higher test scores, regardless of socioeconomic background.
- Dr. James Catterall, UCLA.
4. A 1997 study of elementary students in an arts-based program concluded that students' math test scores rose as their time in arts education classes increased.
- "Arts Exposure and Class Performance," *Phi Delta Kappan*, October, 1998.
5. First-grade students who had daily music instruction scored higher on creativity tests than a control group without music instruction.
- K.L. Wolff, *The Effects of General Music Education on the Academic Achievement, Perceptual-Motor Development, Creative Thinking, and School Attendance of First-Grade Children*, 1992.
6. In a Scottish study, one group of elementary students received musical training, while another other group received an equal amount of discussion skills training. After six (6) months, the students in the music group achieved a significant increase in reading test scores, while the reading test scores of the discussion skills group did not change.
- Sheila Douglas and Peter Willatts, *Journal of Research in Reading*, 1994.
7. According to a 1991 study, students in schools with arts-focused curriculums reported significantly more positive perceptions about their academic abilities than students in a comparison group.
- Pamela Aschbacher and Joan Herman, *The Humanitas Program Evaluation*, 1991.
8. Students who are rhythmically skilled also tend to better plan, sequence, and coordinate actions in their daily lives.
- "Cassily Column," TCAMS Professional Resource Center, 2000.
9. In a 1999 Columbia University study, students in the arts are found to be more cooperative with teachers and peers, more self-confident, and better able to express their ideas. These benefits exist across socioeconomic levels.
- *The Arts Education Partnership*, 1999.
10. College admissions officers continue to cite participation in music as an important factor in making admissions decisions. They claim that music participation demonstrates time management, creativity, expression, and open-mindedness.
- Carl Hartman, "Arts May Improve Students' Grades," *The Associated Press*, October, 1999.

Appendix 3

<http://kenhaycock.com/school-libraries-and-student-achievement/>

School Libraries and Student Achievement

by Ken Haycock on August 7, 2013 in [Community Development](#), [Organizational Development](#)



There is much attention around the importance of school libraries and

advocacy for same. Are we missing the mark?

Do school libraries really make a difference? The answer is no, they don't.

There is ample evidence of efficacy. See, for example, the fine work has been done by the Library Research Service (LRS) in Colorado in documenting the linkages between school libraries and achievement (see: <http://www.lrs.org/data-tools/school-libraries/impact-studies/>). Many associations also provide access to studies, including the International Association of School Librarianship (see: <http://www.iasl-online.org/advocacy/make-a-difference.html>).

Now look at the great infographic below, prepared by the LRS to aid advocates.

The impact is derived from the teacher-librarian. Not only that, it is linked to specific teacher-librarian behaviors, viz., collaborating with colleagues around formal teaching and learning and providing informal staff development opportunities for colleagues. This is indeed consistent with studies of behaviors preferred by school principals.

So, if we want to make a difference in advocacy, shouldn't we dump the rhetoric around school libraries and start advocating for teacher-librarians and insisting on those behaviors for the benefit of student learning? We are all too ready to point fingers at funders while letting teacher-librarians off the hook for doing what really makes a difference.

Added to this of course is the issue that others need to advocate for teacher-librarians as well or it appears as simple self-interest.

As in every other library sector, long-term, thoughtful programs of advocacy need to be developed and implemented to ensure sustainable resources.